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ABSTRACT

This pamphlet discusses issues related to the question of whether and how the federal government should finance prekindergarten public child care. Specifically, several policy statements are explored: (1) Financial apparatus should include input from federal, state, and local levels; (2) There should be local autonomy in management/implementation processes; (3) There should be maximum parental and community involvement in programs; (4) Existing schools and other facilities should be used, and staffing should include other personnel as well as unemployed teachers; and (5) Programs should maximize effectiveness while being child-centered. Other issues discussed are the costs of day care, evaluation of child care programs, student transportation, nutritional standards, licensing requirements, and the possible effects of encouraging women to work. Several current federal programs concerned with child care and child welfare are described, and many recommendations are made for administering a federal system of day care. These recommendations include creating a central agency to administer child welfare programs, providing funding through vouchers paid directly to parents, and organizing a loosely centralized network by dividing the United States into service areas within which would be created prime local sponsors to administer federal day care in a certain area.
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PUBLIC CHILD CARE:

BOON OR BUST?



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INTRODUCTION

The idea of federally-financed pre-kindergarten public child care has received a great deal of attention during the last several years. Child Development legislation, the so-called Mondale-Javits Bill, was passed by both the U.S. Senate and House in 1971 but was vetoed by President Nixon. Similar federal day-care legislation was again introduced in 1972.

Organized groups like the American Federation of Teachers are interested in placing any such preschool care in existing school physical plants; other groups stoutly oppose such a plan. Once passed, any such legislation would impact directly upon several sectors of our society -- health, community services, and education, to name only three -- and would affect, directly or indirectly, each taxpaying citizen whether or not he had children who would benefit from the services.

Two broad questions are raised by the general policy of federal funds to support public child care:

- 1) Is it the intent of the policy to guarantee each American child adequate health care, the satisfaction of basic nutritional needs, and a developmental child-centered program¹, or,
- 2) Is the basic orientation of the policy economic; to allow the increased participation of working mothers in the labor force and to utilize existing under-utilized or unused school physical plants, and to provide employment of additional teachers and/or child care workers?

Of course, these two broad questions cannot be neatly separated, but any examination of day-care services should consider these types of questions. And there are any number of highly controversial "sub-questions" under each of these issues. For example:

- 1) Whether new day-care centers are built or old empty schools are used as centers, will such centers be in the local community or will "comprehensive" centers (similar to current comprehensive high schools) be organized?
- 2) Will pre-school children be required to attend the centers or will attendance be optional?
- 3) Will pre-schoolers be required to ride "school buses" (perhaps with older children) or must parents provide needed transportation? What of those parents who cannot provide such transportation?

- 4) Should un-employed teachers be used as child care workers in the centers? Why? Why not?
- 5) What effect will the employment of a large number of mothers (who would be freed from child care duties under the proposal) have on the over-all labor force and job market?
- 6) Should such centers provide any health care?
- 7) Should such centers provide a feeding program?
- 8) What ages of children could attend the centers?

At the heart of the matter is the issue of the availability and quality of child care services. Such quality care will demand effective and adequate funding, and this fiscal policy aspect of the broader issue is the focus of this pamphlet. Specifically, several policy statements are explored:

- 1) The financial apparatus established for funding child care should be eclectic: there should be financial input at the federal, and possibly the state and local levels.
- 2) Under federal guidelines, there should be a degree of local autonomy in management/implementation processes.
- 3) There should be maximum local participation in any established programs to include parental and community involvement.

4) While existing schools should be considered as possible service-delivery agents, and current un/under-employed teachers not excluded as possible staff, fiscal policy planners should investigate and utilize as many options as possible.

5) Fiscal policy planners should focus on both of the broad questions above: programs should maximize effectiveness while being child-centered and responsive to the individual needs of the parent and child.

This pamphlet is organized to amplify these policy statements. Certainly, all of the questions raised above, and all of the questions raised in the mind of the thoughtful reader, are not definitely answered; for many of the questions there is no one answer at this point in time. But a careful reading of this pamphlet should provide some astounding data on the topic. It will be amply illustrated that the federal government is already heavily committed to funding for child care, and it is proposed that the primary question is not only should there be federal funding for public child care but when will such a policy become law and how will the legislation affect us all.

With these assumptions in mind, one type of child care delivery system is proposed. This proposal is grounded

in a careful study of the literature on the topic and in interviews with those directly involved in child care projects. This delivery system is not, of course, viewed as the answer nor the ideal system. It is presented, along with the supportive data on child care, simply to cause the reader to think seriously about the issue. America is founded on the principle of participatory democracy, and meaningful participation depends upon an informed citizenry. One must have the facts in order to fully participate in one's own government and in order to make rational judgements. If, in fact, we support the plans to have a federal child care system in America, then we need to know all we can about it. If, in fact, we feel that such plans would be ruinous -- a bust, or a boon -- then we also need to be informed so that our arguments can be rational and logical rather than only emotional. Whatever the eventual outcome of the issue, we all hold a vested interest.

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS AND BACKGROUND DATA

OVERVIEW

Irving Lazar² noted in 1972 that the Appalachian Regional Commission Manual on Federal Programs for Young Children listed over 200 federal programs which serve children under six years of

age, and he noted that the Commission did not claim the list was complete. There are programs for young children in every cabinet-level department including Defense, State, Agriculture, Labor, and Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The federal government is currently financially committed to child care through such programs. William C. Copeland noted in 1975 that Title XX of the Social Security Act (successor to the Social Services Sections of Titles IV-A and VI of the Act) supplied \$2.5 billion of the \$13+ billion in federal service and income maintenance funds now supplied for children's programs by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW). There is, he added, an additional \$1 to \$2 billion in income maintenance and service monies available from federal services alone.

COST ANALYSIS

With such a fiscal commitment to child care (in many reports 'child care' is termed 'day care' and in measuring costs there have often been major definitional problems: a 'full day' in one study may be six hours, and in a second ten hours) the federal government has long been involved in studies which attempt to measure, both prospectively and retrospectively, variables of services delivery. These studies may be loosely defined as "cost analysis"

studies or "cost-benefit analysis" studies. The statistical processes involved in such studies may become quite complex, but the underlying question and principles involved are simple: What are the costs of a given program compared to the benefits derived from that program? Do, in fact, the benefits outweigh the costs or is the program so expensive that the costs far outweigh any benefits the public might receive from it? If the government analyzes a program prospectively, then it asks will costs-benefits be equal or will one outweigh the other. These questions are asked before a program, like Comprehensive Child Care, is begun. Retrospective examination, however, occurs after a program is underway -- perhaps it has been operating for some time. If it is found that costs far outweigh benefits, then perhaps measures can be taken to reduce costs or increase benefits or both.

An analogy can be drawn which may help one to understand cost-benefit analysis. The analogy is simplistic, but it contains the basic principles involved. Assume one plans to plant a garden near one's home so that fresh vegetables can be raised. One may reason that with fresh vegetables -- corn, beans, peas, okra, lettuce, tomatoes, and so on -- one's grocery bill will be cut for the summer months and thus one can save considerable cash. Also, if one is frugal, there should be a surplus

of vegetables (discounting those given away to family and neighbors) to store in the freezer for winter. In fact, there may be enough to store so that one's winter grocery bill is also slashed. As one plans the garden one is engaged in prospective cost analysis.

However, the issue quickly becomes more complex. Let's assume that one does not own the necessary equipment to turn the land. If the land has not been plowed for some years, then a rather large tractor-pulled plow may be required. Keeping in mind the benefits hoped for (fresh vegetables, the cost and value of which can be easily measured), one has to begin to build the cost side of the formula. If one does require a tractor for initial turning then there are several costs involved; labor cost for the operator; cost of the use of the machinery; cost of fuel for the machinery; cost for depreciation; and, possibly, several other costs.

Once the land is turned, furrowed, and ready for planting, other costs arise: seeds or settings; fertilizers (some plants require more nitrogen-fixing agents than others); stakes to stake pole beans and/or tomatoes; perhaps a new garden hose for watering; hoes and other weeding equipment; sprays or other insecticides (there are now various organic insecticides on the

market as well as lady-bugs which will devour various kinds of pests); and containers for harvesting, sealing, and storing the produce. All of these costs are measurable or tangible and may easily be compared to the expected benefits as illustrated below:

COSTS

- A. 1. labor of tractor operator
- 2. machinery use
- 3. fuel
- 4. depreciation
- 5. miscellaneous

- B. 1. seeds/settings
- 2. fertilizers
- 3. stakes
- 4. equipment
- 5. insecticides
- 6. containers

BENEFITS

Fresh Vegetables

Another measurable cost is one's labor and skill involved in growing the crop. If one did not grow the vegetables, and thus make direct labor inputs into their production (for example one may say that one's labor in the garden is worth \$5.00 an hour), then one would have to buy them if one wanted a fresh tossed salad. And in purchasing a head of lettuce, one makes

indirect labor inputs: one worked in a machine-shop, as a teacher or a secretary, or executive, to earn the money to buy the vegetables. So one could also compare labor costs in planning the garden.

But what of psychic cost-benefit? What of intangibles? For some people, working in the hot sun in a garden is a psychic benefit, a plus. Some find the work enjoyable, refreshing, renewing. One may claim that the fresh air and sunshine, the physical exercise, and challenge involved are all benefits which one could hardly measure but which should certainly be included in any cost-benefit analysis. Others would agree to the importance of assessing these intangibles, but would view all the factors involved as psychic costs, not benefits. Some find such work tedious, tiring, and dirty. While they would agree that there is a great deal of exercise involved, they would prefer to spend their leisure time on the golf course, jogging, or swimming.

So, in fact, the relatively simple business of prospectively planning a garden and analyzing its cost-benefits may become quite complex. Some people carry on with the project with little planning and only after the season is over do they attempt a retrospective analysis. This tally may prove traumatic if one does not plan and evaluate along the route.

This analogy illustrates the complexity of cost-benefit analysis on an individual scale. The processes become phenomenally more complex when applied to the collective public and when administered by the government -- federal, state, or local. For example, how would one compute the costs, on an individual basis, of a public (tax-supported) recreation park? Of course, there are tangible costs. Each person who uses the park may be assumed to pay "X" amount for road maintenance, clean-up and grass-cutting, facilities, and so on. These are user costs: one pays because one uses the park. But what of the non-user who pays taxes and supports the park? What is the value of knowing one shares a cost of keeping open and maintaining the Grand Canyon National Park, Mount McKinley National Park in Alaska, or Hawaii National Park, near Hilo, if one can never expect to visit those places? What of the benefits one may derive by building one's home near such a park? Its very proximity may increase the value of the home, and the psychic pleasure one gets from living there. How can one measure the cost-benefit relationship in this case?

Perhaps in no other sector of use do the processes become as complex as in the area of child care. This Historical Analysis section of the pamphlet illustrates the kinds of problems encountered, and the above analogies should

help make some of the underlying principles clearer. There are not easy answers, but if there is to be federal funding for public child care, the public has every right to know as much about costs -- the bill they are paying through their tax dollars -- and how costs are estimated as they do about benefits. "Benefits," such as a public child care center and supervised care 9 AM to 5 PM daily, may ring hollow if the costs (however measured) of such care exorbitantly outweigh the benefits (however measured). The public needs to be highly cognizant of cost-benefit analysis and the complex relationships between the two poles.

GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS AT COST ANALYSIS

An early analysis of costs was completed by HEW in 1967. An examination of the budgets on which the 1967 study was based shows that most cost differentials were accounted for by the number of children per staff member (and thus the amount of staff time allotted to each child). The study also illustrated that costs may vary in different areas of the country.⁴

A more recent costs study was completed by ABT Associates under contract with the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). The ABT report was published as A Study in Child Care 1970-71. The ABT study "...involved a

description and analysis of 20 child care centers and systems that were considered ...as 'among the better centers and systems of their kind in the country.'"⁵ The following represent the ABT findings:

ANNUAL CHILD-CARE COSTS:

- 1) \$2,349 per child based on an average daily attendance (ADA) of 25 children
- 2) \$2,223 per child - ADA 50
- 3) \$2,189 per child - ADA 75

"The average cost per enrollee in the ABT study would be somewhat less than the cost figures based on ADA."⁶

Employing different research methodologies, other studies have arrived at different costs per child. In 1970, for example, Westinghouse Learning Corporation, also holding an OEO contract, surveyed 289 centers, 577 parent users, and an area probability sample of 134 day care homes and 1,812 families which were potential users of child care. The following data was generated:

- 1) custodial care costs \$324 per year per child (py/pc)
- 2) educational care costs \$540 py/pc
- 3) developmental care costs \$1,368 py/pc

Other studies have been completed by the Inner City Fund under contract to the Office of Child Development, and

the U.S. Senate Finance Committee reports that although statistics on actual parents' costs are 'fragmentary,' they would appear to be much less than the data thus far cited.

Further, care costs "...under Federal programs appear to vary widely, both according to the program under which it is provided and according to the State in which it is delivered."⁸ The average annual cost per child of care under Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) social services program (both federal and state) was \$1,117 in 1974 on a nationwide basis.

As noted above, the 1967 HEW costs analysis revealed geographical disproportional variations in care costs. Simply, the same level and/or type of care may cost a different amount of money depending on the area of the country studied. This finding was corroborated by a special HEW survey in 1973 which showed that federal funding for child care ranged from about \$240 per child in Wyoming to slightly over \$3,000 per child in Pennsylvania. "In these cases the quality and amount of care provided must have been very different."⁹ These differences mean that a child receives a different quality of care depending on his residence.

Similarly, full-year, full-day, Head Start programs also show 'great variations' in costs. In 1973 the

the national average Head Start federal per-child cost was \$1,041. However, "statistics from the Office of Child Development show amounts of \$69 in Vermont, \$180 in Colorado, \$381 in Utah -- compared with \$2,222 in New York, \$2,104 in California, and \$1,994 in the District of Columbia."¹⁰

While various costs studies have arrived at different estimated costs and actual costs do vary, "...the most important ingredients in determining the cost of a program are the level of wages (in a given area) and the number of staff members required for a given number of children."¹¹

Most studies indicate that 70-80% of total costs are absorbed by personnel costs (recently child care workers were placed under minimum wage provisions, and, also recently, minimum wages were increased).

This topic of personnel costs and wages raises several interesting points. If, in fact, teachers are used as child care workers, would they not be employed by the federal government? Is it not conceivable that their wages (and benefits) under such a plan would be considerably higher (at least in some geographic areas) than their fellow teachers in the public schools? How would such a dual set of teachers consisting of preschool and school (kindergarten-twelfth grade) interface or

relate in areas with concentrated and powerful teacher unionization? What types of problems might this generate?

FEE SCHEDULES

The issue with fee schedules is whether federal child care programs should require those parents who are able to contribute to the cost of care to do so. On the federal level the concept is gaining in acceptance and has been provided for in a number of recent legislative proposals.

However, attempts to actually implement fee schedules in Head Start failed. It was charged that the proposed fee schedule was too high to be realistic, that it would cost more to administer than would be gained, and that it was "...basically impossible to administer fairly."¹²

A provision of Title IV (Social Security Act: succeeded, as noted, by Title XX) required each state to include a fee schedule in their plans. However, many states never developed such schedules, and where they were developed there were 'wide variations.' Evidently, although many states did not fully comply with the law, they continued to receive federal monies.

ABT Associates, under contract to the Office of Child Development,

completed a report on fee schedules in 1972. Their report fully describes the elements involved in the development of a fee schedule for child care.

FEDERAL FISCAL INVOLVEMENT IN CHILD CARE

The major source of federal operational funds continues to be programs financed under the Social Security Act.¹³ In 1962, amendments to the Act authorized federal funds to be matched by the states in providing care. There were additional amendments in 1968 and 1971 which increased federal funding and expanded the federal role in child care services.

"In recent years there has been other legislation relating to child care including the authorization of Head Start under the Economic Opportunity Act, training for child care and child care services under various education and manpower laws, child care provided in connection with housing and urban development programs, and a number of additional pieces of legislation."¹⁴

It is difficult, if not impossible, to arrive at actual precise total direct federal funding costs. Copeland's estimates are provided on page 6 of this report. The 1974 Child Care: Data and Materials report of the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance also provides considerable in-depth costs data.

In 1974, HEW reported that there was an average annual federal cost (under the broad Social Security Act) of \$883 per child and that 525,821 children were served in 1974: a total of \$46,429,940.

There is a great variety of care provided under the Social Security Act. The kind(s) of care varies both intra-state (within one state's borders) and interstate. A child may stay in a center or in a family day care home. Care may be provided directly by the welfare agency, or, more generally, care may be purchased under contract from other agencies. Like all care provided with federal funds under HEW, this care is supposed to meet the 1968 Federal Interagency Day Care Requirements. Testimony in 1974 before the Finance Committee, however, indicated that there was little monitoring to see if, in fact, the requirements were met.

Just as there is great variety in the types of care provided, there is great variability in the types of programs and their orientation. For example, under Aid to Families with Dependent Children child care is viewed as a work expense and "...states must deduct the cost of child care as a work expense in determining income for welfare purposes."¹⁵ Other programs include the Work Incentive Program (WIN), Child Welfare, and Head Start.

Head Start, discussed above in relation to cost analysis and fee scheduling, was originally administered by OEO but is now under the Office of Child Development in HEW. Federal funding provides up to 80% of Head Start costs and local communities may apply for grants: 10% of the children must be handicapped and 90% of all enrollees must be poor.¹⁶

TRAINING OF CHILD CARE PERSONNEL

The 1971 report of the Committee on Finance¹⁷ noted that there is no one federal program specifically designed to train child care personnel. "In addition, there is a lack of trained personnel to plan and direct the development to new child care resources."¹⁸ The Auerbach Corporation studied child care as provided and delivered under WIN, and in its report (delivered before the 1971 Committee) the Corporation noted: the "...lack of trained staff represented the greatest single barrier to the expansion of child care ..."

The Social Security Act (Section 426) does authorize grants to institutions of higher education to work in the field of child welfare, including child care. "The funds may be used for teaching grants, traineeships, or short-term training activities."¹⁹

Section 426, then, impacts directly on formal established or potential programs in colleges and universities, and an expansion of such training would be actualized in the formal college or university setting. However, it was reported in 1972 that "new designs of college programs for paraprofessional workers in health, education and welfare agencies will be developed under a \$74,601 grant to the New Careers Development Center of New York University made by Esso Foundation -- Dr. Frank Riessman, director of the Center."²⁰ Riessman, editor of Social Policy journal at the time, was interested in paraprofessional training in innovative college programs such as 'Universities Without Walls,' 'External Degree Programs,' and 'Weekend Colleges.' If actualized, such concepts could greatly expand the impact of training programs.

While there is no one formal federal program geared specifically to the training of child care workers, certain related programs have been implemented. For example, some 900 kindergarten teacher aides were trained in fiscal year 1974 under the Office of Education's Follow Through program. Additionally, the Labor Department's manpower programs have offered occupational training, including training for child care. "Under the Manpower Development and Training Act enacted by

the 93rd Congress (Labor) programs will generally be replaced by block grants to states and localities. The kinds of training which will be provided will be determined at the state and local levels."²¹ If a Comprehensive Child Development Act is passed, such a grant's concept could be expanded for the training of child care workers, and a measure of control over the training of such workers would be returned to the states and local communities.

The Office of Child Development (OCD) began, in 1973, to fund a new type of training program. "The program is aimed at developing a new level of child care personnel, called the Child Development Associate."²² Thirteen pilot projects were funded in 1973 by OCD. The projects were aimed at "...programs emphasizing experience, rather than academic training of enrollees. It is hoped that the program will result in a system of credentialing for graduates of this type of child care training."²³

The idea of credentialing child care workers under a proposed Child Development Act raises several issues. For example, would it be best to issue a Child Care Worker Certificate (generally defined as a document attesting that one has fulfilled certain requirements and may practice or serve in a given field) based on experience alone (how many years?), experience plus formal

(in a college or university) or informal (at a weekend seminar or colloquial, for example) training and/or study, or based on a grade earned on a set examination? This issue is vital: remember, 70-80% of the cost of the proposed child care will go for personnel wages and benefits. The underlying issue is this: the public will pay for whatever teacher services are deemed (hopefully local communities can have a say in determining what type of certification is necessary in their area), and, regardless of the type of certification eventually decided upon, the public has every right to demand the highest quality supervision possible for the money spent.

Head Start and the Social and Rehabilitation Service have also worked in child welfare training. Other monies for such training are provided by Titles I and III, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and even the Department of the Interior has shown an active interest in such training.

NUTRITION

Work has also been completed in the field of nutrition. The Special Food Services Program (SFSP) "...provides grants in institutions for children including child care and Head Start centers."²⁴ The SFSP provided an estimated \$59 million for such grants in 1975.

INCOME TAX

Amendments to the Internal Revenue Code in the 92nd Congress "...provided for a major change in law relating to personal income tax deductions allowable for child services."²⁵ A deduction of up to \$400 a month is allowable for in home care/domestic help, and out of home costs allowable are:

- 1) \$200 month/1 child
- 2) \$300 month/2 children
- 3) \$400 month/3 or more children

"The deduction is fully available to married couples who are both employed and whose combined income does not exceed \$18,000 a year. The allowable deduction is reduced by 50¢ for each dollar of income above \$18,000."²⁶ In 1972 the amount of deductions claimed was \$1 billion and "...it is estimated that this resulted in a reduced liability for Federal income taxes amounting to \$224 million."²⁷

STANDARDS AND LICENSING

The Economic Opportunity Act of 1967 resulted, in the Spring of 1968, in the creation of a Federal Panel on Early Childhood which developed and promulgated the Federal Interagency Day Care Requirements of 1968 (IDCR). The IDCR are effective in all programs administered by the OEO, HEW, and

Department of Labor. Work of a revisional nature was carried out in 1972 and 1973, but, basically, the 1968 requirements are "...technically...in effect...(but) rarely monitored."²⁸ Generally, the federal role in licensing has been advisory: some matching funds have been provided for the states' licensing functions.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND EVALUATION

ORIENTATION

Planning (recommendations) and evaluation should interface. In effect, the two processes are the two sides of one coin: planning is decision making based on data gained through evaluation. In thinking about planning and evaluation, it is useful to again return to the vegetable garden analogy. The importance of both processes was stressed above. Let's assume that, after a careful cost analysis, one plans to plant the garden. All of the steps to the planting stage are completed, and small shoots appear in neat rows. Assume that at this stage a catastrophe strikes: a rabbit or deer destroys several rows of plants; a child accidentally tramples a section; or a hail storm or heavy rains damage portions of the crop. At this point, one must carefully evaluate the current situation, re-evaluate his long-range goals (fresh, home-grown vegetables),

and new costs (new settings or seeds, perhaps renewed turning of the soil, etc.), and plan what action to take. Decision making in this case may become complex, but the planning and evaluative decisions involved in the case of the proposed Child Development legislation will be infinitely more complex. And yet government planning and evaluation is just as crucial and is essentially just as elemental as that involved in the garden. In both cases initial investments (costs) are made, and in both cases certain actions will transpire which will cause those responsible to have to make hard evaluative decisions. If such decisions are not made correctly along the route, then all invested costs may well be lost. There is one major difference, however, in the two cases: the individual gardener pays his own way and will benefit or lose directly from the venture, but in the case of federal funds to public child care, each taxpaying citizen pays the bill and stands to lose by poor government evaluation or gain (directly or indirectly) by effective evaluation and planning techniques.

With these ideas in mind, certain recommendations are proposed about how an effective public child care delivery system may be organized. For the moment, it is assumed that some type of comprehensive child development legislation will be enacted by the federal government.

Such an assumption is, as noted previously, grounded in sound data. As noted earlier, this proposed plan should be viewed only as one possible way of implementing public child care on the local level. One primary goal of the proposal is to cause one to think about the issue and to possibly formulate alternative plans. The federal government is heavily committed to child care and if it's commitment is to be most effective then there must be public awareness of the issue and public involvement in the local community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is useful to clarify certain key points: first, a "child care delivery system," as proposed below, is viewed as that network whereby federally funded child care is delivered or brought to the local user. It includes such factors as: the center itself; the personnel who staff the center; the licensing of the center and certification of the staff; the optional employment of mothers and/or community workers in the center or as consultants; and so forth. The delivery system includes all the means by which the funded care is actually delivered to the children and to their parents.

Secondly, a federative delivery system is proposed. The term "federalism" is defined as: "A system of

government in which power is divided by a written constitution between a central government and regional or subdivisonal governments. Both governments act directly upon the people through their officials and laws. Both are supreme within their proper sphere of authority."²⁹ The United States, India, West Germany, Switzerland, and Australia all have federal governments.

A federative model is proposed because it is felt that there should be maximum local participation. Since the money for the plan would come originally from the local community, and since it would be returned to the local community through child care centers, it seems only logical that local leaders, acting as representatives for the general public, should have maximum input into the decision-making of the local centers.

The local centers or delivery systems may be termed Prime Local Sponsors (PLS) since they will be the units closest to the people and since they will sponsor the child care in the local community. This general concept of a coordinated but loosely centralized network was explored by the Advisory Committee on Child Development in 1976. The Committee noted that "the federal government can increase the return of its investment in social services (including child care) by converting the

presently limited systems -- often serving only specialized parts of the human resource programs in selected geographical areas -- into a standardized, adequately funded, and generally recognized access network."³⁰ It is recommended that checks against increasing bureaucratization on the federal level be designed into the system.

The concept of local units is not new. In the 1971 and 1972 proposed federal legislation on day care, the concept of prime local sponsors (PLS) and the minimum population of a local government unit which would allow the unit to qualify as a PLS generated considerable controversy.³¹

The parameters of the units considered allowable as PLS were broad in the 1971 bill: a PLS may be "...a state, a locality, a combination or localities, Indian tribes on a Federal or State reservation, or a public or non-profit agency or organization. Included are parent organizations, community Action Agencies, labor unions, business organizations, and the like."³² To be approved as a PLS, each unit would be required to establish a Child Development Council (CDC) "...which shall be responsible for developing a child development plan, for approving basic program policies for the area to be served, and to make decisions with respect to which program applicants will be funded."³³

In his 1975 article, Jule M. Sugarman³⁴ devotes three full pages to the concept of service areas. He addresses the problem of using population as a determining criterion for PLS unit establishment. In the 1971 bill it was proposed that 5,000 persons would justify a center; in the 1972 version the figure was 25,000. Some critics called for figures of 25,000 or even 500,000.

Certainly, population is one possibility for determining the need for and the funding of a PLS. However, while it is advocated that a PLS type network be established and be primarily federally funded, a second type of funding method is proposed and advocated.³⁵

The recommended funding method is a direct one. It is proposed that the federal government make direct grants, in the form of a voucher, to the parents needing child care. This voucher concept is tied to the fee schedule concept which is discussed on page 16. As noted in the Historical Analysis section of this pamphlet, the federal government has been actively involved in cost analysis studies since at least 1967. It is presumed that the technique of arriving at the cost of a minimum level of quality care is feasible. For illustration purposes, assume that the government has determined that a minimum level of child care can be provided to all children, regardless of geographical

locality, for \$1,500 per year per child. Based on a hypothetical fee schedule and solely for such illustrative purposes, the following table (Table 1) may be formulated if fee scheduling and the voucher system are combined. This recommendation would guarantee those parents needing child care a place in the local community where this care would be delivered. It would allow a "market" system to operate: parents could choose the type care best suited to their needs (either in-home or center care), the locality would be favorable, and a minimum level of quality care would be guaranteed. Parents could increase their input, however to "buy more care."

In 1970 at the White House Conference on Children, the Task Force on Delivery of Services considered the use of vouchers. The recommendations of the Task Force are underscored:

"...We will maximize diversity in program models, attractiveness to different population groups, innovation, flexibility and the possibility of parental input if a diversity of instruments is also accepted within the context of a publicly designated system. Thus, we would favor some combination of publicly operated programs, programs operated by the non-profit and the profit components of the voluntary sector, programs operated locally by

small proprietary groups..., perhaps even programs operated on a small franchise basis."³⁶

Under the proposed scheme, the United States may be divided into several "service areas," and smaller "service areas" may be drawn intrastate. Within each service area, local community PLS(s) would be created. These local units, cognizant of local needs, would collate data about all the services offered within the community; would work in authorization of each center or home as an acceptable receptacle for vouchers' use; and would, generally, act as a liaison agent between the federal government and the local parent-user. Each "certified" child care delivery system (or center) would have to meet federally mandated guidelines. It is conceivable, under this scheme, that local governments, municipalities and/or states, would want to make monetary inputs to supplement local child care. This would be encouraged, and, again, the PLS would coordinate this fiscal input.

According to this plan, the approved centers would offer quality care to anyone who need and/or desire such care. Possibly, this care would be totally funded by government(s) involved; possibly, according to the income (see Table I), the parents would buy the care. Variable types of child care would be encouraged; perhaps the allotted money

TABLE I

TOTAL FAMILY INCOME	VOUCHER	FEE
0	\$1500	0
\$ 1,000	\$1500	0
\$ 2,000	\$1500	0
\$ 3,000	\$1500	0
\$ 4,000	\$1500	0
\$ 5,000	\$1200	\$ 250
\$ 6,000	\$1000	\$ 500
\$ 7,000	\$ 750	\$ 750
\$ 8,000	\$ 500	\$1000
\$ 9,000	\$ 250	\$1250
\$10,000+	0	\$1500

would buy local care 7 AM - 6 PM daily. If a mother only wanted to buy (with voucher or cash) two hours of care daily, or only occasionally, this would be encouraged. As noted, the PLS as a local unit and not the federal government would be responsible for determining local community needs and for responding to those perceived needs. Maximum parent and community input is encouraged.

The need for transportation (and/or busing) would also be decided by the parents in a local community. Remember, it is proposed that federally funded child care centers be community centers. Perhaps the centers would be close enough to the childrens' homes to require no transportation other than what the parent will provide. However, if a mini-van or a bus was required, the trip would be short. The center would provide on a market basis safe, efficient transportation and only within a residential area, a subdivision, or a local community. According to this proposal, a child would remain in familiar surroundings, and parents would live close enough to the center to insure parent-child care, supervision, and cooperation. And, finally, parents would be encouraged to visit the center as regularly as their schedules allowed to make any meaningful inputs possible.

The needs for coordination and parent alternatives is underscored by Nelson and Young:³⁷

"Integration and coordination of federally supported day care programs clearly is essential if we are to develop machinery for rational allocation of day care resources. In the absence of such coordination, it is difficult to see how resources are to flow to where the needs are greatest."

"Even with the coordinated set of programs, we think it would be a mistake to run a system of publicly supported day care facilities in such a way as to give parents no choice among alternative day care facilities. We think it is a bad idea to assign children to particular centers."

THE SCHOOLS AS CENTERS: TEACHERS AS CHILD CARE PERSONNEL?

Alternatives. Children should not be assigned to centers, but parents should be allowed a maximum range of choice: which center?, what type of care?, what hourly schedule?. These questions should rightfully be left to the individual parents.

However, extant public schools which are currently under or un-utilized may be one type center used under the federative scheme. As noted in the

Historical Analysis section, one problem in establishing new centers had traditionally been that of zoning; a desirable location simply may not be zoned to accommodate a child center. Using public schools would circumvent this problem.³⁸

Use of extant facilities would also lower "start up" and construction costs. S. B. Kamerman³⁹ had made a comparative study of current child care programs in nine countries: France, Israel, Canada, Sweden, the U.K., Poland, the Federal Republic of Germany, Yugoslavia, and the United States. On the concept of construction costs, he found that "... data and breakdowns in the source of funding and construction and start-up costs are not precise enough for exact comparability."⁴⁰ However, examination of individual cases is enlightening. In Germany, for example, construction and operating costs vary state to state and there is no one consistent pattern. However, a "reasonably typical" case⁴¹ may be:

- 1) average cost for construction (building(s), equipment, land) for a kindergarten is \$2,640 per child
- 2) the average operating cost for a 66-place kindergarten (4 classes) would include:
\$62,000-personal costs
8,650-material
600-miscellaneous
\$71,250-total

It should be noted, however, that while schools may be used for centers, other possible site use is not ruled out; it should also be recognized that use of present school plants will not mean "zero" construction and start-up costs. In fact, many existing facilities may have to be generally remodeled. Such essentials as toilets, sinks, tables, chairs, and desks may have to be overhauled or bought new for the child client. Use of extant facilities does not mean simply "plugging in" and beginning service delivery.

Within the federative network proposed, the type of deliver offered by the Canadian Council on Social Development⁴² is envisioned: "There are full-day, part-time, after-four and 'drop in' services located in specifically designed day care centers, family day care homes, converted church basements, schools, etc., depending on the preferences of parents, which part of the country they live in and, quite often, on their financial resources."

So, schools may be utilized but not to the exclusion of other possible delivery sites. Each site would provide the same quality of care and follow the same type guidelines or mandates.

What of teachers as child care workers? Possibly teachers or ex-teachers would be employed. As noted in the Historical Analysis, some programs do exist for training or re-training and re-orientation. Certainly, un or under-employed teachers would be encouraged to investigate these programs. Doubtless these existing programs would be expanded.

As noted above, personnel costs account for a large portion of a child care program budget. Kamerman⁴³ found that in existing programs "...staff salaries account for about 80% of the operating costs in day-care-center programs and close to that in preschool or kindergarten programs."

Certainly, teachers (or ex-teachers) would be encouraged to apply for places within the newly established educative programs, but not to the exclusion of others who would want to serve. There would also have to be supervisory/administrative and possibly certification programs established, and these, too, would encourage teachers to re-train. However, the programs would be open to all.

In the federative plan, federal funds would come from taxation directly to the parent as a voucher: these could be "cashed" through PLS affiliated centers of a variable nature. Some

funding would possibly come from state or local sources. Under this scheme, the current federal income tax provisions on child care would doubtless "go by the board." Otherwise, certain persons (parents) would be receiving a "double payment" for child care; a direct voucher payment plus indirect tax support. Of course, some individuals without children or with older children would receive no such payment(s) or support.

NUTRITION

Feeding programs already exist within certain child welfare programs. These could be greatly expanded to provide an adequate diet and nutritional health care for each child. Health-care workers would be incorporated as support personnel to visit each center on a regular basis.

EVALUATION

Basically, two broad types of evaluation are recommended: "process evaluation" and "outcome evaluation."⁴⁴ The former type of evaluation emphasizes administrative monitoring and is geared to managerial evaluation, accounting, and, in the federative context, regulation. An example of the regulatory nature of process evaluation is the 1968 Federal Interagency Day Care Requirements; these should be rewritten

to incorporate the federative process and applied.

The second type of evaluation, "outcome" or "cost-benefit analysis" should be centered in the local community. While process evaluation may be viewed as an external process originating on the federal level and applied to the PLS and service areas, outcome evaluation should derive in the local community. After a specific local community has drawn up precise objectives they may ask: "What difference did the program make?"

While it is proposed that those in the local community are best prepared to draw up objectives for child care programs which best fit their specific needs. Social policy planners note that local persons may not be "sophisticated" enough in research methodology to accomplish their desired ends. While local input is highly recommended, to include direct or indirect parent involvement at all possible times, it is also acknowledged that local communities may not be able to marshall resources for evaluation and to coordinate meaningful implementation by themselves. Therefore, it is recommended that the federal government establish a federal level educational center. Federal agents could thus serve an educative function. Doubtless, federal agents would have access to the latest

technology, would be highly sophisticated in research design and methodology, and could act as in-service trainers, advisors, and consultants to local communities.

While every service area in the United States would operate under the same federal mandates and while all would offer the same level(s) of quality child care, all areas would not exercise the same outcome evaluative techniques. It is understood that some communities may center their research in the economic spheres. Keeping "transitory conditions," (that is non-working mothers would probably return to work eventually when the children were older even without a center) in mind, some communities may concentrate research around the question: Are more mothers, perhaps of low socioeconomic status, engaged in the work force after intervention than before? What is the impact(s) of such increased employment on the community? On the individual child?

The federal government could greatly facilitate implementation of individual methodologies. Some designs may center around questions of staff-child ratios; level of training (and nature of that training) of staff; number of children per group or class, and so on. It should be underscored that not only will the nature of

evaluation vary from community to community, but the perceived needs and goals of intervention and establishment of child centers may also vary. Also, the federal government will act at the request of local communities. Perceived needs will come from the federal level, but these will not be imposed arbitrarily from the federal level.

ASSUMPTIONS-IMPLICATIONS

The following assumptions may be drawn from the above historical analysis:

- 1) The federal government is presently fiscally committed to child welfare. Estimates on total cost of this commitment vary; all agree that it is considerable.
- 2) There is presently no federal centralized program of child care; some 200 programs are administered in each cabinet-level department.
- 3) The federal government has long been involved in child welfare program cost analysis.
- 4) There is currently geographical disproportional variations in care costs; it is proposed that quality and kind(s) of care also vary geographically.
- 5) The federal government has practical experience with fee schedules.

6) There is no federal program for training of child care personnel (and supervisory personnel), but experimentation and implementation of some programs have been carried out.

a) Federal funds for child-care training may impact directly on institutions of higher education; in programs of education, social policy etc.

b) Federal funds for such training may be applied through innovative, non-formal programs.

c) The federal government has some experience in credentialing of child-care specialists.

7) The federal government has established programs on nutrition for children which could be expanded.

8) Through the Income Tax structure, the federal government currently provides non-direct support to parents for child care.

9) The federal government currently has in effect an apparatus for monitoring certain child welfare programs: the IDCR.

CONCLUSION

Would federal funding for public child care prove to be a boon or a bust? Although considerable data has been

presented centered around this question and a possible model for a delivery system for such child care has been proposed, the "final" answer to this question remains open. However, several recommendations have been made:

1) While there is a great deal of federal funding currently underway for child welfare, there is also a lack of federal coordination of the myriad of services and programs offered. There should be a massive program aimed at coordination of all extant federal programs and monies currently provided for child care.

Once completed, this federal level interagency (perhaps termed a Child Development Council) will serve as the federal sphere of the proposed federative model.

2) There must be local community involvement, recommended as being expressed through service areas and PLS.

3) Parents may receive direct federal support for child care in the form of a fee-schedule voucher.

4) Local schools may be modified to serve as delivery sites, and under or unemployed teachers may be retrained as child care personnel; but certainly all possible local sites should be investigated for possible use and the entire human resource pool of a community should be tapped.

There are many additional points and recommendations which could be underscored. But perhaps it is best to close this pamphlet as it was opened: with questions. Certainly, the number of possible questions generated is limitless, but a few will be listed:

1) Is it fair for the federal government to subsidize child care when only some, not all, citizens will need the service?

2) Should the federal government be involved in child care at all?

3) Could local communities really be expected to realize their own child care needs?

4) Does not such a proposed delivery system actually benefit, either directly or indirectly, the entire population and not only working parents?

5) Would parents be allowed to use non-PLS-related centers if they could afford their services? (Vouchers as noted, would be cashed in only at related centers.)

6) Would centers allow after-school care for a few hours until mothers returned home from work?

The questions are far from answered. But this policy analysis and these recommendations have offered one approach to answering the question of federal funding for child care. Avenues for continued investigation have been opened. It is proposed that the reader discuss the topic with others, that he read other reports on the topic and become as knowledgeable as possible on the issue. In the final analysis, what directions this controversial issue takes depends solely on the wishes and expressed desires of an informed citizenry.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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⁴Committee on Finance. Child Care: Data and Materials. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1974, p. 19.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid., pp. 19-20.

- ⁹Ibid., p. 20.
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 20-21.
- ¹¹Ibid., p. 21.
- ¹²Ibid.
- ¹³Ibid., p. 22.
- ¹⁴Ibid.
- ¹⁵Ibid., p. 23.
- ¹⁶Ibid., p. 25.
- ¹⁷Committee on Finance. Child Care: Data and Materials. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971.
- ¹⁸Ibid., p. 13.
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- ²³Ibid.
- ²⁴Ibid., p. 27.

²⁵Ibid., p. 28.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid., p. 29.

²⁸Ibid., p. 30.

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³¹Jule M. Sugarman, "Getting Organized for Child Development Services" in Stevanne Auerbach, Editor, Rationale for Child Care Services: Programs vs. Politics. Vol. I of IV vols. (N.Y.: Human Services Press, Inc., 1975), pp. 77-90.

³²"The Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971." Washington Bulletin, Vol. 8, Issue 21 (1971), pp. 109-112. See also Roth.

³³Ibid., p. 111.

³⁴Sugarman in Auerbach, pp. 77-80.

³⁵Considerable insight, valuable data, and ideas for this subunit were gained in private communication with Phoebe Cottingham, Economist; Institute for Public Policy Studies and Department of Economic and Business Administration, Vanderbilt University.

³⁶"Task Force on Delivery of Services," Developmental Child Care Forum, White House Conference on Children, 1970, in Auerbach.

³⁷Richard R. Nelson and Dennis R. Young, "National Day Care Policy" in Young and Nelson, Editors, Public Policy for Day Care of Young Children Organization, Finance, and Planning, (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1973), pp. 91-103.

³⁸For an analysis of an existing child care network which does utilize the public schools, see W. Norton Grubb and Marvin Lazerson, "Child Care, Government Financing, and the Public Schools: Lessons from the California Children's Centers," School Review, Vol. 86, No. 1 (November 1977), pp. 5-27.

³⁹S. B. Kamerman, Child Care in Nine Countries. DHEW Publication No. OHD 30080. Office of Child Development, Office of Human Development. Washington,

D.C.: US DHEW, 1975. Incidentally, many countries use a fee schedule scheme.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 30.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 35.

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The Canadian Council on Social Development (Ottawa, Canada, 1972), p. 13.

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⁴⁴Glen G. Cain and Robinson G. Hollister, "The Methodology of Evaluating Social Action Programs," in Rossi and Williams, pp. 109-137; also pragmatically useful in Ludwig L. Geismar, "Thirteen Evaluative Studies" in Mullen and Dumpson, pp. 15-38, and Wyatt C. Jones and Edgar F. Borgatta, "Methodology of Evaluation" in Mullen and Dumpson, pp. 39-54.